

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 2 through 9 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please add new claims 10 through 32 as follows.

Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121 (c)(1)(i) and 1.121 (c) (3) all of the pending claims are presented in clean form below. A marked up version of the claims is attached hereto as Appendix B.

1. (Twice amended) An ultrasonic motor, comprising:
a stator having an annular piezoelectric element, wherein the piezoelectric is polarized into a plurality of segments along the circumference;
a rotor arranged to face the stator, wherein the piezoelectric element vibrates the stator such that the rotor is rotated, and wherein the piezoelectric element has a first surface facing the stator and a second surface opposite from the first surface;
an electrode plate fixed to the second surface of the piezoelectric element; and
a flexible plate fixed to the electrode plate, wherein the flexible plate includes:
a flexible substrate;
a conductor arranged on part of the flexible substrate to be electrically connected to the electrode plate; and
a reinforcement arranged on the flexible substrate at a position that is off the conductor.

2. Cancelled.
3. Cancelled.
4. Cancelled,
5. Cancelled.
6. Cancelled.
7. Cancelled.
8. Cancelled.
9. Cancelled.

10. (New) The motor according to claim 1, wherein the reinforcement is formed such that the rigidity of the flexible plate changes at an interval that corresponds to one or half wavelength of vibration generated by the piezoelectric element.

11. (New) The motor according to claim 1, wherein the reinforcement reinforces the flexible substrate at positions spaced by an interval that corresponds to one or half wavelength of vibration generated by the piezoelectric element.

12. (New) The motor according to claim 1, wherein the conductor suppresses vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element that corresponds to the conductor, and wherein the reinforcement suppresses vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element that is off the conductor, thereby stabilizing vibration of the piezoelectric element in the circumferential direction.

13. (New) The motor according to claim 1, wherein the reinforcement includes a plurality of balancing portions and a plurality of connecting portions, wherein the balancing portions are spaced by a predetermined interval in the circumferential direction of the piezoelectric element, and wherein each connecting portion connects an adjacent pair of the balancing portions.

14. (New) The motor according to claim 13, wherein the conductor suppresses vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element that corresponds to the conductor, and wherein the balancing portions suppress vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element that is off the conductor, thereby stabilizing vibration of the piezoelectric element in the circumferential direction.

15. (New) The motor according to claim 14, wherein the connecting portions are

thinner than the balancing portions in respect of the radial direction of the piezoelectric element so that the connecting portions do not hinder vibration of the piezoelectric element.

16. (New) The motor according to claim 13, wherein the balancing portions are arranged at an interval that corresponds to one or half wavelength of vibration generated by the piezoelectric element.

17. (New) The motor according to claim 13, wherein the balancing portions and the connecting portions are integrally formed.

18. (New) The motor according to claim 1, wherein the flexible plate further includes a cover portion that partly covers the conductor, and wherein the cover portion is formed of the same material as the reinforcement.

19. (New) The motor according to claim 1, wherein the segments of the piezoelectric element include a group of A-phase segments and a group of B-phase segments, wherein high frequency voltages of different phases are applied to the A-phase segment group and the B-phase segment group, respectively, wherein the electrode plate includes an A-phase electrode corresponding to the A-phase segment group and a B-phase electrode corresponding to the B-phase segment group, wherein the conductor includes an A-phase conductor member corresponding to the A-phase electrode and a B-phase conductor member corresponding to the B-phase electrode, and wherein each of the A-phase conductor member and the B-phase conductor member has an end portion that contacts only a part of the corresponding one of the A-phase electrode and the B-phase electrode.

20. (New) The motor according to claim 19, wherein each end portion includes a base portion and a comb-like portion, wherein the base portion extends along the circumferential direction of the piezoelectric element, and wherein the comb-like portion extends outward from the base portion in respect of the radial direction of the piezoelectric element.

21. (New) The motor according to claim 19, wherein the segments of the piezoelectric element further include a feedback segment located between the A-phase segment group and the B-phase segment group, wherein the electrode plate further includes a feedback electrode corresponding to the feedback segment, wherein the conductor further includes a feedback conductor member contacting the feedback electrode and a grounding conductor member surrounding the feedback conductor member, and wherein the A-phase conductor member and the B-phase conductor member are located outside of the grounding conductor member.

22. (New) A flexible plate fixed to a piezoelectric element with an electrode plate in between, the piezoelectric element including a plurality of polarized segments, the flexible plate comprising:

- a flexible substrate;
- a conductor arranged on part of the flexible substrate to be electrically connected to the electrode plate; and
- a reinforcement arranged on the flexible substrate at a position that is off the conductor.

23. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 22, wherein the reinforcement is formed such that the rigidity of the flexible plate changes at an interval that corresponds to one or half wavelength of vibration generated by the piezoelectric element.

24. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 22, wherein the reinforcement reinforces the flexible substrate at positions spaced by an interval that corresponds to one or half wavelength of vibration generated by the piezoelectric element.

25. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 22 wherein the conductor suppresses vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element that corresponds to the conductor, and wherein the reinforcement suppresses vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element

element that is off the conductor, thereby stabilizing vibration of the entire piezoelectric element.

26. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 22, wherein the reinforcement includes a plurality of balancing portions and a plurality of connecting portions, wherein the balancing portions are spaced by a predetermined interval in a direction along which the piezoelectric element extends, and wherein each connecting portion connects an adjacent pair of the balancing portions.

27. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 26, wherein the conductor suppresses vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element that corresponds to the conductor, and wherein the balancing portion suppresses vibration generated at a portion of the piezoelectric element that is off the conductor, thereby stabilizing vibration of the entire piezoelectric element.

28. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 27, wherein the connecting portions are thinner than the balancing portions so that the connecting portions do not hinder vibration of the piezoelectric element.

29. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 26, wherein the balancing portions are arranged at an interval that corresponds to one or half wavelength of vibration generated by the piezoelectric element.

30. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 26, wherein the balancing portions and the connecting portions are integrally formed.

31. (New) The flexible plate according to claim 22, wherein the flexible plate further includes a cover portion that partly covers the conductor, and wherein the cover portion is formed of the same material as the reinforcement.